

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GUATEM 00669 020348Z

17

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 OMB-01 AID-20 PC-04 HEW-08

NIC-01 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-10 PA-04 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 DRC-01 /152 W

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R 012231Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2003

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 0669

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS ELAB

SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT ON LABOR DISPUTES

REF: A-20; GUATEMALA 0581

1. AFTER GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE OF JANUARY 28 WARNING WORKERS AT SOCIAL SECURITY INSITUTE (IGSS) TO CEASE ILLEGAL STRIKE, UNION LEADERS REPORTEDLY ACCEPTED NEW GOG WAGE INCREASE OFFER OF 15 PERCENT FOR LOWEST PAID WORKERS, BUT IGSS RANK AND FILE APPARENTLY REJECTED AGREEMENT DURING JANUARY 31 MEETING AND DISPUTE NOT OVER.

2. AT ELECTRIC COMPANY, UNION WHICH HAD THREATENED TO BEGIN ILLEGAL STRIKE ON JANUARY 28 BACKED OFF AND IS NOW AWAITING ANSWER TO REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH PRESIDENT ARANA TO DISCUSS DISPUTE. GOVERNMENT MINISTER HERRERA IBARGUEN CALLED UNION LEADERS TO HIS OFFICE FEBRUARY 1 AND WARNED THEM NOT TO INITIATE ANY WORK STOPPAGE. ELECTRIC COMPANY PUBLISHED DATA ON WAGES PAID (WHICH RANGE FROM \$7 TO \$20 PER DAY AND ARE FAR ABOVE GOING RATES FOR MOST GUATEMALANS) AND RIDICULED UNION ASSERTION THAT WORKERS SUFFERING HUNGER. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT GOG WILL UTILIZE INDE WORKERS TO RUN ELECTRIC COMPANY PLANTS SHOULD WORKERS INTERRUPT FLOW OF ELECTRICITY.

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3. ARMY INTELLIGENCE CHIEF COL. OVIDIO MORALES TOLD DATT
THIS MORNING THAT GOVERNMENT BELIEVED SITUATION HAD QUIETED AND
DID NOT EXPECT SERIOUS TROUBLE TO ERUPT. WHILE WE TEND TO AGREE
WITH MORALES FOR THE MOMENT, FAILURE TO SETTLE THESE LABOR
DISPUTES CARRIES WITH IT SERIOUS POSSIBILITY OF
CONFRONTATION.
MELOY

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